

A LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER



Just over a year since Ambassador David C. Mulford's arrival in New Delhi, he took time to share with SPAN his excitement about the dramatic progress that has taken place in the relationship between the United States and India. He mentions the successful visit of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, the new Open Skies agreement, and openings for cooperation in nuclear power and military procurement in an article, "The Dynamic U.S.-India Relationship," by Laurinda Keys Long.

"The Great Paving," by Justin Fox, illustrates how construction of the Interstate Highway System made America more mobile and prosperous, and changed the culture in some ways. Sudipt Arora looks at a similar ambitious project in "Indian Highways: Planning for Prosperity." Rajesh Mahapatra points out advantages of open trade and investment systems in "India on Wall Street," explaining how American investors, Indian companies, their employees and shareholders all benefit when Indian companies list on the U.S. stock exchanges.

The potential for more American fruits and vegetables being made available to Indian consumers through elimination of remaining market inhibiting restrictions is explored by A. Venkata Narayana, in "Synergy in Agricultural Trade." The article is part of our cover package of stories on more choices in food and food production. Richard Manning continues this exploration of choices in "Super Organics." Scientists can produce abundant, delicious, and nutritious agricultural products that are safe to eat and better for the earth. The key is smart breeding, based on what farmers have been doing instinctively for hundreds of years. Also innovative is an economical and environment-friendly farming method outlined in the article, "Zero Tillage in Indo-Gangetic Plains." Lea Terhune relates how Indians have been contributing to American agriculture and society for more than 100 years in "Sikhs Rule in California's Central Valley."

Another contribution to the United States' "melting pot" of cultures is the Sufi tradition of Islam, popularized by American writer Coleman Barks' translation of the works of Persian poet Jelaluddin Rumi and spread by immigrants who have taught American devotees the meaning of Sufi prayers and the techniques of the whirling ritual. The story is brought to us in Anjum Naim's "Sufism in America," with vibrant photographs by Lee Guthrie.

An equal feast for the eyes is the photography of Annie Griffiths Belt, illustrating "Reefs in a Prairie Sea," in which John L. Eliot describes the strange beauty and changing geology of South Dakota's Badlands National Park, along with efforts to preserve its history and ecology. Govind Singh takes a look at the tension between

preservation and inevitable change in one of India's beauty spots in "Sustainable Development in Uttarakhand."

One apparently inevitable change for humans is the process of aging, although individuals have been searching for an antidote since the dawn of history. The search continues, now in laboratories around the world, and one San Francisco scientist's genetic research on microscopic worms renews the ancient hope, says Stephen S. Hall in "Kenyon's Ageless Quest."

SPAN welcomes a new writer in this issue, distinguished theater journalist and drama critic Romesh Chander, who investigates, in "Arthur Miller in Indian Theater," the link between Indian audiences and the characters created by one of America's greatest playwrights.

We've also included some informative articles from Dipesh Satapathy on the American Corners, which are providing research facilities and opportunities for discussions and exhibitions in four regions of India; and from Minister Counselor for Consular Affairs William M. Bartlett on the procedures for obtaining student visas.

Take your choice and enjoy!